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Secretariat

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Secretary-General's bulletin

Learning and development policy

The Secretary-General, for the purpose of ensuring that all staff members are aware of the learning and development policy of the Organization and its objective to enhance the skills and competencies of staff members as a means to meet the changing needs of the Organization, promulgates the following:

Section 1
Objectives and scope

1.1 The objectives of the learning and development policy are as follows:

(a) To provide appropriate training opportunities to address the professional development needs of staff members and support the Organization in fulfilling its mandates;

(b) To assist and encourage staff members to develop and enhance their skills, knowledge and competencies and contribute to their professional growth;

(c) To enable the Organization to attract, retain, motivate and develop its staff;

(d) To create a positive work environment and greater staff satisfaction and commitment.

1.2 The present policy applies to all Secretariat staff members, regardless of their location or source of funding.

Section 2
General principles

2.1 Maintaining the professional and managerial competence of staff is an important priority, as it represents a critical investment in the future of the Organization. Learning and development is a responsibility shared by the Organization, its managers and each individual staff member.

2.2 A minimum target of five days for professional development per year is established for all staff members. As five days is a minimum target and not a maximum, managers are encouraged to provide appropriate learning and development opportunities to their staff, whenever possible.

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2.3 Learning and development opportunities should normally be made available to staff at all levels.

2.4 Managers are required to discuss and agree on learning and development plans, as well as the allocation of time for learning and development activities, with individual staff members in the context of ongoing performance management.

2.5 Staff members are required to demonstrate an active commitment to continuous learning by assisting their managers in determining their learning and development needs and applying and sharing the skills gained from learning and development activities.

2.6 Staff members and managers are encouraged to think of learning and development in the broadest sense, including:

(a) Participation in self-study programmes, such as professional reading, e-learning, Internet and Intranet research, videos and other computer-based training programmes;

(b) Group activities, such as face-to-face workshops, seminars, team projects, networking, videoconferencing, participation in communities of practice and occupational/functional networks;

(c) One-to-one learning, such as cross-training provided by other colleagues, career counselling, coaching, mentoring and knowledge-sharing;

(d) Experiential learning, such as on-the-job training, assignments, missions, team projects and task-based training.

2.7 Learning and development priorities shall be established based on:

(a) Needs derived from programme priorities at the organizational and departmental level as outlined in the relevant workplans;

(b) Current or future work assignments that are consistent with the goals and priorities of the Organization;

(c) Assessment of individual staff member's needs;

(d) Career and professional development goals in relation to current and future job requirements.

2.8 Learning and development activities are developed using design principles that are proven to be effective and reflect best practice.

2.9 Learning and development activities are monitored and evaluated using relevant principles and tools. Impact assessment is built into programme planning and implementation to enhance effectiveness, relevance and the applicability of learning.

2.10 The Organization shall address learning and development needs by a combination of:

(a) Centrally coordinated programmes that are managed by the Office of Human Resources Management to develop core values and core and managerial competencies, support organizational reform and promote a shared organizational culture;

(b) Decentralized programmes, aimed at addressing specific substantive and technical needs in departments and offices. As the key responsibility for determining learning and development needs and providing development opportunities lies with managers themselves, resources for the upgrading of substantive and technical skills are allocated directly to individual departments and offices, on the basis of annual training plans. Full responsibility for the management of these funds is delegated directly to the heads of department/office who are responsible for equitable distribution of the funds. In the allocation of funds, priority shall be given to staff members holding appointments other than temporary.

Section 3
Support for learning and development

Learning Advisory Board

3.1 The Learning Advisory Board, comprising senior officials, shall advise on the Organization's learning and development priorities and plans.

Learning and development opportunities

3.2 Heads of department, office and mission are responsible for ensuring that staff members are aware of the learning and development opportunities available to them.

Career support advice and resources

3.3 In addition to the support managers are required to give to their staff in the context of ongoing performance management, comprehensive career support advice and resources are made available to staff members either through Career Resource Centres established at Headquarters and major duty stations or Career Development Units in missions.

Learning and development staff

3.4 Staff responsible for learning and development within each department and office shall liaise with the Office of Human Resources Management on specific needs and disseminate information on learning and development activities within their office. Departments and offices without a designated Staff Development Officer shall nominate a learning focal point. Learning focal points within each mission shall be responsible for liaising with the Integrated Training Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support.

Section 4
Final provisions

The present bulletin shall enter into force on 1 July 2009.

(*Signed*) **Ban** Ki-moon
Secretary-General